



CHEMICAL USE

WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

Excessive or improper use, storage and disposal of chemicals and other hazardous wastes in daily operations can result in pollution and contamination of local environmental resources. Use of pesticides, fertilizers and herbicides for gardening and to control insects can lead to toxic runoff into streams, coastal waters and groundwater. Chemicals used for cleaning guest rooms or in recreational facilities such as swimming pools can contaminate local soil and water supplies and may pose a potential hazard to human health. Leakage of CFCs and HCFCs from refrigerators, air conditioners and other cooling equipment, as well as chemicals used for dry cleaning, in aerosols, fire extinguishers and foams, contribute to the depletion of the ozone layer.

WHY SHOULD I CARE?

- Reduced use and responsible handling of chemicals and hazardous wastes can maintain the quality of tourism resources by minimizing the potential for air, water or soil pollution.
- Improper use, including overuse, of chemicals poses a real threat to the health and safety of guests and staff members.
- Effective management of chemicals and hazardous wastes can reduce water treatment costs and the quantity and cost of chemicals purchased by the hotel.
- Proper use, storage and disposal of chemicals and hazardous wastes can ensure compliance with government regulations and reduce potential fines or clean-up costs.

WHAT CAN I DO?

- Limit the number of chemical products used on your property.
- Reduce contaminants by using natural products such as salt, vinegar and baking soda to clean ovens, drains, windows and floors.
- Use biodegradable and environmentally certified (e.g. Green Seal, The Nordic Swan, the EU Flower) cleaning agents, paints, solvents and other products.
- Use automatic dosing for chemicals for cleaning and swimming pools, to ensure that the appropriate amounts of chemicals are used for each task.
- Train staff in how to handle and dispose of chemicals and hazardous materials responsibly and safely.
- Dispose of hazardous materials responsibly and according to local laws and international standards.
- Regularly monitor air conditioners, heat pumps, refrigerators, freezers and kitchen cooling equipment to detect and eliminate leakage of ozone-depleting CFCs and HCFCs.
- Convert existing equipment to utilize low-Ozone Depleting Potential (ODP) or zero-ODP chemicals. This generally requires replacement of existing equipment parts and/or change of lubricating oil. When purchasing new equipment, choose those that use zero-ODP chemicals.
- When making landscaping decisions, choose native plants that require less water, pesticides, fertilizers and herbicides.
- Use compost or other organic substitutes for chemical fertilizer.
- If possible, use fish, iguanas or other animals to control insects, in place of dangerous pesticides and other chemicals.